NSC

To Quin Shea from Harold Weisberg 5/20/80
JFK Informally

If the FBI and other Departmental components had set out to make it impossible for requesters to know what is involved in referrals, even the identifications of referred records, they could not have succeeded better. Even in affidavits filed in court identification of the records is avoided as though prosecution or survival require it, as may be the case.

The confusion and much extra work and cost are caused by another element. When I finally get the referred record it still is not identified as an FBI record and there is no way in which I can correlate a record from another agency with what is missing from what the FBI provided and be certain I have made the correct identification. Even then the FBI's file identifications will be missing.

The Act provides for consultation with other agencies. It does not require that other agencies provide copies of their records, which are not identical with FBI copies.

A recent experience with the National Security Council is illustrative.

When I received a May 6 letter from NSC I replied on May 13 telling them I had no idea what they were talking about. Under date of May 19 I received the attached and utterly meaningless response. Before I could respond and tell NSC that I have made no request of it I received the attached letter of the 22.

I was aware that the Army had referred to NSC, but - knew this was not in response to any request I'd made of the Army. (It claims to have destroyed all its JFK records.)

I still do not know and have no way of knowing that records were referred to the Army by what "department component or components, FBI or other.

These kinds of procedures waste enormous amount of time and money, deny requesters their rights and frustrate the Act and its intent.

I think it is past time for someone to be thinking of more than wasting money and requesters.